

Poetry.

HELPPFULNESS.

Who causes sunny smiles to grow
Where none were known before,
Or makes one's cup of joy o'erflow
When sorrow's at his door;
Who kindles in another's breast
A bright and healthful glow—
That generous soul, by heaven blest
Will rare enjoyment know.

Who meets along life's rugged road
A traveler, wan and worn,
Bending beneath a heavy load,
Friendless, perchance, forlorn,
And offers now a cheering word
And then a helping hand—
Has in two hearts emotions stirred
That will heaven's praise command.

Who sees a brother in the path
That leads to sin and shame,
Indifferent to impending wrath
And careless of his name,
And guides him in the better way—
God's way of life and peace—
Will see the light of perfect day
Shine round him and increase.

—James J. Reeves.

Contributions.

THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG CONVERT.

THE PASTOR AND THE CONVERT.

In denominations, like the Brethren church, where revival methods are employed to gather the increase, pastors should be very careful in their conduct toward, and work in behalf of, the new convert. In many congregations, not so much in our own community, pastors, or Evangelists, go into the field and preach sermons, make converts, and then leave or allow the new members to fight their way up spiritually, without the assistance of experience, or go back into the world. It is true the really regenerated child of God will forge his path through all difficulties, and advance, even if left wholly alone in the divine life, growing in grace at every step, until perfect in Christ. But how much better would he succeed, and how much sooner would his spiritual strength increase, and how the more speedily would his Christian graces be developed and matured, if cared for and trained by a devoted, earnest, faithful, ministry!

I maintain that it is the duty of the pastor to study carefully the character of the new convert. In my own work I keep a book in which are entered the names of those who are baptized, leaving two or three blank pages between each name. Here I record anything I am able to learn of the life, or disposition, or education of the convert. In my spare moments these items are studied. We want to know our

people, and can only hope to acquire such knowledge by painstaking inspection.

I was informed a day or so ago by a dear brother, a member of our charge, that my style of preaching had changed entirely since my arrival here one year ago. The brother was right. I had learned my people, and the change was necessary.

And while we are looking into the complex make up of our convert we require frequently to administer psychological treatment. The babe believer needs a nurse and an attendant. The pastor must fill these positions. As far as possible he should make a companion of every convert. He should strive to detect the avenues through which he may best reach their hearts, and feed them suitably with the Bread of Life. The minister ought never to allow himself to forget the faces or names of his new members. This bespeaks separation from his ecclesiastical children. To say "I have no faculty for remembering names and faces," is not offering a sufficient apology for dereliction along this line. We should labor to recollect them, and endeavor to call all our spiritual offspring by their given names.

Then, too, we should try to lead the convert into the home feeling in the church. Introduce them to no formality, at least at first, in the services. It is a good plan to be in the house a little before the time for meeting and talk pleasantly with the members, especially the younger, as they enter. And then, at the hour appointed, merge the social into the regular service in such a manner that the transition may escape detection. Call for a hymn, (some ones favorite) or a sentence prayer, or anything that the Holy Spirit may direct, however peculiar it may seem. By just such means, during the past year, seventeen of my young people, from thirteen years of age to into the twenties, who never led a meeting nor offered a public prayer are now doing both. So, I might say, ought we to interest them in all the schemes of Christian work, and to do this the pastor himself must study thoroughly each department of religious activity.

There is another duty that the pastor owes the convert which must be performed most cautiously and kindly. I refer to the correction of his faults. This the minister who has the esteem and confidence of his flock can do. Yet never ought he to lose sight of the fact that he is disciplining those whom he loves with all his heart.

In my labors among the young I seek always to appropriate carefully all the little things, these dear friends are pleas-

ed to tell me to be used, on the spot, as illustrations of some practical duty, or to set them right on a matter about which I consider they may err. For example: A young lady once told me that when, on a certain occasion, she chanced to be late for the service, she stole quietly into the house so that no one would notice her, and took a rear seat, out of the view of the congregation. This sister's motive may have been good, but there was the tardiness and the appearance of religious pusillanimity to reprove and correct. I replied, "Do you remember that lady who in the days of Jesus, wished to be cured of a physical disorder, and, to this end, chose to creep among the crowd then around the blessed Christ and touch the blue fringe of his robe? This sister received release from her malady; but it was not until she was called publicly into the presence of the Master that she gained the greater blessing and obtained the soul comforting assurance, 'Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.'" The application was evident and needed no further comment.

I might speak of other duties devolving on the pastor with respect to the young convert; but the space allowed for these thoughts is limited and I must defer their reference now.

I pray the Lord, that we, as Brethren pastors, may be ever alive to the tremendous responsibility resting upon us toward the converts to Christ; that we may be all aglow with the love of Jesus; that our work in their behalf may have its rising source in this divine principle within our hearts. Then will our pastorates be rekindled into an inflammation of Godly affection, and we will all love Him who first loved us.

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THE CHURCH AND THE NEW CONVERT.

The church of Jesus Christ is the most potent power of our civilization. The civilization that is of God and tends toward God's idea of a true man as personified in Christ.

The church has had, and still has, many faults and errors; but with all that she is the power that moves the world.

The church is destined to not remain thus in a state of comparative weakness and inefficiency. She is to put on her garments of beauty. She is to move on until she will be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

The text for this brief article is "Feed my Lambs." John 21:15, until we all come "into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stat-